

**Opposition  
Resurgent, Iranian  
Influence In  
Tajikistan**

Some 7,000 demonstrators in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on Sunday called for the dissolution of the legislature, a new legislative election, and the immediate privatization of land and enterprises. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Maleki said on Saturday that Iran intends to expand air and rail links between Dushanbe and Tehran, to begin cooperation in the oil and textile industries, and to print textbooks to help the Tajiks switch from the Cyrillic to the Persian alphabet. Iranian media said yesterday that Tajik President Nabiyeu plans to visit Iran soon.

**Comment:** Recent regime moves toward more authoritarian rule—including the reinstatement of the Tajik Communist Party and the President's hints he might assume additional powers—have increased the likelihood of confrontations like those that brought the government to a standstill last fall. Iran's chances of gaining a foothold in Central Asia are greatest in Tajikistan and will increase once the Tajiks, who are isolated from the other Muslim republics by their non-Turkic language, adopt the Persian alphabet. The Sunni Tajiks remain wary, however, of the fundamentalism of Iran's Shia.

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